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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 001990

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/14/2029

TAGS: PGOV PHUM PROP TU CH

SUBJECT: SHOOTING ELEVATES URUMQI TENSIONS AND SECURITY
POSTURE -- JULY 14 XINJIANG SITREP

REF: BEIJING 1972 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Political Internal Unit Chief
Graham Mayer. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

¶1. (C) Urumqi was largely calm July 14 but the fatal shooting of two Uighurs by police on July 13 appeared to have resulted in an increased People's Armed Police (PAP) presence in Uighur neighborhoods and the closure of many shops that had only recently reopened. Jiefang Nan Road, where the incident took place, was blocked to traffic July 14. Some PAP units camped under freeway overpasses around the Uighur quarter appeared to be settling in for a long-term stay. The domestic press announced the implementation of regulations requiring all Urumqi residents to carry identification cards or face detention. The measures also ban residents from carrying batons or knives, distributing leaflets and gathering on the streets. American citizens in Xinjiang expressed concern about continued blockage of the Internet and international phone calls. Major Communist Party-run newspapers July 14 devoted extensive coverage to "anti-China" protests in Turkey and reported on public "indignation" over "biased" Western media reporting. End Summary.

Urumqi Tense after Shooting, PAP Units Settle in

¶2. (C) Embassy officers did not witness any incidents of violence in Urumqi July 14. The official death toll remained unchanged at ¶184. Urumqi Airport was conducting normal operations July 14, according to an Embassy team on the ground in the city. The presence of People's Armed Police remained highly visible, with PAP units camping underneath freeway overpasses of Donghuan Road. The units appeared to be establishing a long-term presence in and around the Uighur section of the city. PAP units were observed cleaning their staging areas and setting up chairs and tables.

Monday Police Shooting in Urumqi

¶3. (SBU) Domestic newspapers headlined the deadly shooting by police of two Uighurs in Urumqi on Monday July 13. China's press said Urumqi Public Security Bureau officers fired on three Uighurs who were attacking a fourth Uighur man with clubs and

knives near People's Hospital on Jiefang Nan Road just before 1500. The area was a hotspot of violence during the July 5 riots. Domestic news accounts said PSB officers fired warning shots before opening fire on the assailants. Two Uighurs died at the scene and a third injured by the gunfire was taken to People's Hospital. Chinese news reports described the shooting as legal and said lethal force was only used after the attackers "resisted" police with their knives.

¶4. (C) Tensions appeared higher in Uighur neighborhoods after the shooting. A number of Uighur businesses that had only recently reopened after the violence of July 5-7 were closed again on July 14. PAP troops in the area were observed to be carrying weapons and wearing riot gear again. Embassy officers reported that a large section of Jiefang Nan Road has been blocked to traffic, including the section where the shooting took place.

ID Checks, Weapons Ban in Urumqi

¶5. (U) The Xinhua News Agency reported that, starting July 12, all Urumqi residents were required to carry identification cards or driver's licenses and display their documents at police checks. "Police will take away for interrogation anyone who does not have a card," Xinhua reported. The Urumqi PSB had also banned the carrying of batons or knives

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and forbidden residents from shouting slogans, posting banners, or handing out leaflets. Any gathering "in city streets or public venues" was also banned, according to Xinhua.

Continued Internet and Int. Phone Outage

¶6. (SBU) Post's American Citizen Services Unit has seen a drop in the number of calls from Americans in Xinjiang. The ACS unit has contacted 85 Amcits since July 5. Eighteen have left the Xinjiang region. American citizens calling the ACS unit July 13 and 14 voiced less fear for their personal safety and more frustration over continued blockage of both Internet service and international telephone calls.

Chinese Media Criticizes Turkey, Western Press

¶7. (SBU) China's domestic press devoted considerable coverage to attacks on Chinese diplomatic facilities by "separatists" as well as public indignation over foreign media "bias." The Global Times, a national mass-circulation newspaper published by the Communist Party's People's Daily, ran as its top story July 14 an account of "anti-China" demonstrations in Turkey. The article accuses "extreme nationalists" in Turkey of making baseless accusations that the Chinese government was engaged in a "massacre" of Uighurs. The article notes that Chinese Internet users are growing increasingly angry with Turkey's response to the Urumqi riots. Similarly, the People's Daily ran an article July 14 describing public anger at the Western media's "inaccurate" reporting of the riots. The article specifically accuses journalists from Spain, the Netherlands, Japan and the UK of inciting a crowd outside a mosque on the afternoon of July ¶10. The incident, according to the paper, led to the injury of one police officer. Ordinary citizens, the People's Daily reported, were calling the Urumqi press center to complain about

irresponsible reporting by the foreign media.
GOLDBERG